

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 DODE-00 EUR-12 EA-07 /061 W
-----020417 104923 /70/53
P 241437Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8942

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TANANARIVE 0400

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y-TEXT(PARAS 3 AND 4)

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: PDIP, MA, US
SUBJECT: CHARGE'S FAREWELL CALL ON PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA

1. ALTHOUGH RATSIRAKA DID NOT APPEAR TO HAVE ANYTHING SPECIAL ON HIS MIND, I BELIEVE HE WAS INTENT ON CONVEYING TO US THAT THERE IS NO HOSTILITY ON PART OF GDRM TOWARD USG. HE SAID HE TAKES ISSUE WITH SOME OF OUR POLICIES, JUST AS GDRM TAKES ISSUE WITH ITS OTHER "FRIENDS", E.G., USSR (OVER LAW OF THE SEA), MOROCCO (OVER SAHARA), CHINA (OVER ANGOLA), FRANCE (OVER DJBOUTI AND COMOROS).

2. HE ASKED HOW I FOUND SITUATION HERE NOW. I REPLIED THAT IT WAS SOMEWHAT BETTER BECAUSE GDRM OFFICIALS, WHILE ALWAYS FRIENDLY, ARE MORE READY TO MEET WITH US AND BECAUSE RADIO MADAGASCAR APPEARS TO HAVE CONSIDERABLY REDUCED ITS ANTI-US STANCE. I ADDED THAT NASA ISSUE AND EVENTUAL COMPENSATION FOR OIL COMPANY NATIONALIZATIONS STILL REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED: FORMER APPEARS TO BE WELL IN HAND, BUT HE SHOULD NOT IGNORE FACT THAT USG CONSIDERS COMPENSATION FOR NATIONALIZATION A SERIOUS MATTER AND USG WILL BE EAGER TO SEE AN EARLY SETTLEMENT. HE DID NOT COMMENT BUT ASKED RE NASA IF I HAD SAID ANYTHING TO THE PRESS ABOUT OUR NEGOTIATION. I SAID THAT I HAD LIMITED MY STATEMENTS SIMPLY TO FACT THAT

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MATTER HAS NOT YET BEEN RESOLVED, EXPLAINING TO HIM THAT I KNEW HE WANTED TO PLAY THAT ONE CAREFULLY. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR MY CONSIDERATION.

3. PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN EXTREMELY BUSY OF LATE, TRAVELLING TO MANY DIFFERENT PARTS OF MADAGASCAR AND PREPARING FOR UPCOMING ELECTIONS. HE COMPLAINED THAT MALAGASY

PEOPLE HAVE NOT YET DEVELOPED CIVIC PRIDE, FOCUSING MORE ON MONETARY REWARDS, AND THIS RETARDS THE REVOLUTION. HOWEVER, HE HAS HOPES THAT THE ELECTIONS AND TRUE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE'S INTERESTS AT ALL LEVELS OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONVINCE THE PEOPLE TO WORK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL.

4. HE SAID HE HOPED ALL COUNTRIES WOULD RESPECT MADAGASCAR FOR WHAT IT IS, NOT FOR WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE IT TO BE. I REMINDED HIM THAT, AT OUR FIRST MEETING ON APRIL 10 OF LAST YEAR, I HAD TOLD HIM THAT DIFFERENT IDEOLOGIES DID NOT PREVENT THE US FROM DEVELOPING A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MANY COUNTRIES. I SAID THAT, AS FAR AS I WAS CONCERNED, THE GDRM HAD NEEDLESSLY TAKEN A HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWARD US AND THAT THE USG, WHILE ENCOURAGED BY RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN OFFICIAL MALAGASY ATTITUDES, IS WAITING TO SEE HOW SINCERE THE GDRM REALLY IS. HE THEN CLAIMED THAT HIS REJECTION OF KEELEY BECAUSE OF HIS CURRICULUM VITAE WAS NOT BECAUSE OF HOSTILITY TO THE US BUT BECAUSE AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT BE AN AUTOMATIC STEP. HOWEVER, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS STILL UNSTABLE AT THAT TIME AND VERY INEXPERIENCED AND THAT HIS ACTION REGARDING THE AGREEMENT DID NOT MAKE THINGS BETTER IN US-MALAGASY RELATIONS.

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5. I ASKED IF HE HAD ANY FURTHER PROBLEMS WITH THE US ATTITUDE IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. HE SAID "NO". I THEN ASKED IF HE STILL BELIEVED THAT THE USG HAD BEEN UP TO NO GOOD HERE, THE CAUSE OF THE EXPULSIONS. HE SAID, SURPRISINGLY, THAT HE DID NOT SUSPECT THE USG OF ACTING CONTRARY TO MALAGASY INTERESTS, BUT PERHAPS CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS HAD ACTED WITHOUT KEEPING ME INFORMED. I REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT THE CASE, AND WE HAD NEVER BEEN

INFORMED BY THE GDRM OF WHAT DYER AND ALLEN HAD BEEN ACCUSED. HE SAID, "WELL, YOU SEE, YOU ARE NOT INFORMED," ADDING THAT EVERYONE KNOWS THAT CIA AND DIA DO THINGS WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR AMBASSADORS. HE THEN WITHDREW HIS COMMENT ABOUT DIA, BUT SAID THAT WHEN ON DUTY WITH THE NAVY HERE, HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY AN EMBASSY STAFF MEMBER FOR ASSISTANCE AND THAT THE LATTER ADMITTED THE AMBASSADOR WAS NOT AWARE OF THE APPROACH BEING MADE. HE THEN SHIFTED SUBJECTS, SAYING THAT THE EMBASSY HAD NEVER INFORMED THE GDRM OF ITS TWO-WAY RADIOS, WHEREAS THE CHINESE WERE VERY CORRECT IN THESE MATTERS.

6. AS WE BEGAN TO WRAP UP THE DISCUSSION, HE EXPRESSED HIS LIKING FOR AMERICANS AND MANY ASPECTS OF AMERICAN LIFE, BUT SAID THAT MADAGASCAR IS STILL TRYING TO ELIMINATE VESTIGES OF COLONIALISM WHICH REMAIN HERE. HE REASSURED ME THAT HE WAS NOT HOSTILE TO THE US AND NOTED THAT I TRACED A BETTER ATTITUDE HERE BACK TO JULY-AUGUST
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1976. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN URGING HIS SENIOR OFFICIALS AND OTHERS TO RECOGNIZE THAT DESPITE DIFFERENT IDEAS AMONG NATIONS, THERE WAS NO REASON WHY THEY SHOULD NOT BEHAVE CIVILY TOWARD EVERYONE.

7: COMMENT: PRESIDENT MADE NO REFERENCE IN ANY WAY TO WHAT HE EXPECTED FROM US ONCE WE RESOLVE OUTSTANDING DIFFERENCES. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY DELAYED, DESPITE REMARKABLE REDUCTION OF GDRM DEMANDS, THAT NASA ISSUE WAS ABOUT TO BE SETTLED.

8. OVERALL, HE WAS RELATIVELY RELAXED, BUT HE BECOMES NOTICEABLY DEFENSIVE WHEN A SUBJECT IS BROACHED THAT HAS NOT BEEN AN EASY ONE FOR THE GDRM. IN PUBLIC, AND HE HAS BEEN GETTING OUT INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE MUCH MORE DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS, HE IS MORE SELF-ASSURED AND INSPIRED. HE HAS BEGUN TO LOSE THE WEIGHT THAT HE APPARENTLY PUT ON WHEN HE SAT FOR WEEKS AND MONTHS IN THE PALACE WITHOUT WANDERING VERY FAR.

9. HIS RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION AS TO WHETHER HE CONTINUED TO HARBOR SUSPICIONS ABOUT US ACTIVITIES IN MADAGASCAR APPEARS TO REPRESENT A MORE RELAXED VIEW OF THE WESTERN WORLD, PERHAPS IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT NORMAL RELATIONS CAN BE MAINTAINED WITH US WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT A THREAT TO MALAGASY INTERESTS. MY POINT WAS, AND HE APPEARED TO HAVE APPRECIATED IT, THAT NORMAL RELATIONS CANNOT DEVELOP AND MATURE WITHOUT A BEGINNING OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE. NATURALLY, HE TRIES TO DISPEL ANY VIEWS THAT HE TILTS TOWARD THE SOVIETS AND THE CHINESE, BUT HE IS VERY WATCHFUL THAT

THE LATTER (OR ANYONE ELSE) DO NOT GNAW AWAY AT MALAGASY
INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY.SHEINBAUM

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